

Landscape Horticulture Spring 2016 Student SLO

Spring 2016 - Landscape Horticulture

May 2nd 2016, 2:20 pm CDT

Q3 - What did you like about this program?

That most of the classes were extremely geared towards real life landscape horticulture applications.

I enjoyed the hands-on opportunities available. Other than that, this was just a program I took to have a credential under my belt.

I liked the functionality that some of the classes provided. For me, since a Technical College is generally only two years I want to learn as much as possible that will help me in the field. For some of the courses I really feel they did a great job.

I liked that I was able to find a career path that suits who I am and what my interests are. The teachers were very helpful both in and out of class and were a strong resource for finding a job in the field. With the new greenhouse there are even more possibilities for the program to grow as everyone gets more accustomed to the new setting.

I liked how we got to work out side and learned many things about plants.

Q4 - What would you change about this program?

Drop the "Thinking Critically and Creatively" class from the program requirements.

Have accountable and knowledgeable instructors. This past year the program lost, I believe, the best instructor for this program. This past fall we had two agriculture instructors, one for Organic Plant Production and Horticultural Plant Production. I was very appreciative that these two were allowed to step up and fill in when no one else would, but their class material focused more on agriculture crops than horticultural. I feel that they two instructors were left to their own devices in trying to come up with material for class. First off, the college should have started the process of looking for a new instructor the moment they new there was a vacancy and if not, should have properly educated and assisted the agriculture instructors with what we as students have already covered and what we didn't. Also, there has been some concern with the class Thinking Critically and Creatively. Non-traditional students say that they do not find this class helpful and that it is a waste of their time and money. If there was some way Non-traditional student could test out of this course, I think they would be more likely to achieve in others areas and be more successful because they are not complaining about this one class. Also, if the landscape horticulture program advisory board still saw this class as fitting the needs for education, I suggest they move it to the first year of the program. I believe in this because it would aid in the completion of Landscape Design 1 that is held in the second semester. If an instructor states that they are going to keep a schedule, they should make sure they follow through. I myself am very goals oriented and keep a in-depth planner, but for projects such as the Turf Management Binder and Landscape Project Management Portfolio it would be nice if the schedule was kept so no student would fall behind and still be able to ask questions as well as keep accountability between the students and instructor.

There are many things that I think could be changed about this program. Many classes that I found utterly useless and therefore had no motivation in them. Ethics, Critical and Creative Thinking, Plant Science, Organic Plant Production, and 95% of College Mathematics I found to be useless in all aspects of my major. In ethics we did not talk once about anything to do with landscaping, ecosystems geography etc. In Critical and Creative Thinking while our teacher did try to intertwine our major with the class, it felt very forced and irrelevant. Also there was a lot of overlay in Critical Thinking and Ethics. Plant Science and Organic Plant Production I felt had potential, but both were taught by teachers who were almost entirely agriculture based. I did not enroll to study how to farm and grow crops. What I would change is add an Irrigation 1 and 2. I would also gear the program much more towards landscaping than agriculture. I feel that Critical Thinking and Ethics could easily be

replaced by something like a Woody Plant Identification 2 and Study of Herbaceous Plants 2. Even just a refresher course would have been much more useful than either of these classes. For me this program became very demotivating at times due to the fact that these classes along with College Mathematics simply felt like "credit fillers."

I felt like a lot of the required classes were filler classes to help to reach the credit limit. I personally want to go into sports turf maintenance so I think more turf classes would be beneficial. This program could also really use a set of irrigation classes to help strengthen our knowledge in the field.

I would want more hands on training with tools. For people who want to due labor that is more important than just drawing landscapes.

Q6 - As a result of this program:

Q6_1 - I have learned effective communication skills.

Answer	%	Count
Strongly Disagree	0.00%	
Disagree	20.00%	1
Neither Agree nor Disagree	20.00%	1
Agree	40.00%	2
Strongly Agree	20.00%	1
Total	100%	5

Q7 - Provide any comments you have on effective communication skills you learned.

Being a non-traditional student (NTS), I had effective communication skills prior to studying this program, however, Xxx Xxxxx was excellent at educating us how to properly present our designs to customers. Xxx Xxxxx also invited different guest speakers to help us understand the keys of communication.

Through my experiences, I have become an excellent speaker and communicator, but through this program, little progress was made in furthering my skills. Others may have furthered their skills, but I feel that I am at a point where I cannot build up much more with my skills. I did however LOVE competing in PAS where I am nationally ranked for the employment interviewing process.

The Speech class that we have as a requirement felt fairly useless since we present our designs and projects in all of our other classes anyways. I feel that the Speech class requirement could be put to better use as an irrigation class, refresher course, or even another level of Landscape Maintenance.

We did a lot of presentations throughout the two years, and focused heavily on communicating what we learned to clients and in job interviews. I think I managed to get my last two jobs because of these skills.

I have learned how to give good presentations to clients.

Q8 - As a result of this program:

Q8_1 - I am able to apply mathematical concepts.

Answer	%	Count
Strongly Disagree	0.00%	
Disagree	0.00%	
Neither Agree nor Disagree	20.00%	1
Agree	60.00%	3
Strongly Agree	20.00%	1
Total	100%	5

Q9 - Provide any comments you have on mathematical concepts you learned.

We went step by step every time we had to figure math out when we ordered retaining wall block, base coarse, pavers, and the like. It was very helpful to go over take-off's from designs repeatedly until everyone "got it"; we were encouraged to take notes.

Again, this is where a few times of review would be nice because Math is not for me and I will not be able to understand it with one sitting, but over my career. But when you spend three class meeting straight of reading take-offs, this was a waste of my time and I do not feel that I used my money well, especially in this situation.

College Mathematics was entirely useless as a whole. We learned all of the math necessary for Landscaping in our Landscaping classes. I learned 90% of College Mathematics in high school already and my high school math was sufficient for our program.

We learned basic math that goes along with scheduling, fertilizer calculations, seeding calculations, and many other mathematical concepts that go along with landscaping.

There is alot math you have to do with estimates.

Q10 - As a result of this program: - I learned how to transfer social and natural science theories into practical applications.

Answer	%	Count
Strongly Disagree	20.00%	1
Disagree	0.00%	
Neither Agree nor Disagree	0.00%	
Agree	40.00%	2
Strongly Agree	40.00%	2
Total	100%	5

Q11 - Provide any comments you have on transferring social and natural science theories into practical applications.

Xxx Xxxx taught us the reasoning behind making specific landscape horticulture decisions: the 5 W's and How. The way they explained them made SENSE!

I feel this question is regarding our Ethics class or sustainability class. For me this class had zero amount of functionality. None of it recognized Landscaping and I don't feel that learning what qualifies as a right or wrong argument has any use for me in my field. This class seems to be intended for psychology and I feel that that's the program it belongs in.

We learned a lot about social sciences and interaction with others, but natural sciences were focused on less.

I have learned how to grow plants and not to grow them and also how to identify them.

Q12 - As a result of this program:

Q12_1 - I learned critical thinking skills.

Answer	%	Count
Strongly Disagree	40.00%	2
Disagree	0.00%	
Neither Agree nor Disagree	0.00%	
Agree	60.00%	3
Strongly Agree	0.00%	
Total	100%	5

Q13 - Provide any comments you have on critical thinking skills you learned.

I already had these skills from life experiences: Military life, work life, previous education. My instructor for "Thinking Critically and Creatively", Xxxxxx Xxxxxxxx, is a very nice person and was enthusiastic about teaching this course, but for me it was COMPLETE waste of time. I contacted them at the very beginning of this program (two years ago) and asked if thee was any way I could test out but they said the state of WI hadn't developed any such test. I think that was just an excuse but I didn't push the envelope. The course should be dropped from the Program Requirements lists and/or the college should offer a way to test out for students like me (an NTS.)

I am already a great thinker and I usually think outside of the box. I was able to build on what I already knew through Thinking Critically and Creatively.

Critical Thinking was one of the most useless classes I have taken in academics.

I learned how to break apart and analyze sites for many different applications including design, planting, construction, and so on.

Q14 - As a result of this program:

Q14_1 - I have learned to use technology effectively.

Answer	%	Count
Strongly Disagree	0.00%	
Disagree	0.00%	
Neither Agree nor Disagree	0.00%	
Agree	60.00%	3
Strongly Agree	40.00%	2
Total	100%	5

Q15 - Provide any comments you have on what you learned about using technology effectively.

I had previous knowledge of all Microsoft Office products and we used them often. The landscape design software we were able to learn is AWESOME - kudos to XXX Xxxxx for finding such a helpful software program! I will be using the upgrade in my real-life landscape design business following graduation.

I have a basic knowledge of your typical lap top and desktop but I failed to receive an education when it came to using the large printers. A go-to need for the printer is required for our Landscape Design 2 class due to our projects being based off of computer software, but the landscape program printer is currently out of order and I am truly disappointed that I cannot print off my designs that I have put 10-20 hours into.

A lot of our landscaping classes we were able to design power points and create Landscape Designs. I really felt very fortunate we had access to this software and really appreciated being able to work with it.

We used Word, PowerPoint, and Excel for a lot of projects and I feel comfortable with them.

Q16 - As a result of this program: - I have learned to value myself and work ethically with others in a diverse population.

Q16_1 - I have learned to value myself and work ethically with others in a diverse...

Answer	%	Count
Strongly Disagree	0.00%	
Disagree	0.00%	
Neither Agree nor Disagree	20.00%	1
Agree	40.00%	2
Strongly Agree	40.00%	2
Total	100%	5

Q17 - Provide any comments you have on what you learned about valuing yourself and working ethically with others in a diverse population.

I already have these skills and abilities. The only other comment I can put here is that I have enjoyed learning and working with everyone at Western.

I learned how to handle diversity in landscape construction and how to use each others strengths when working in the field. Also, knowing the proper way of completing a job and not cutting any corners was a valued lessons. Otherwise I gained my knowledge from other groups and organizations I am involved in on campus.

While our Ethics class had nothing to do with learning how to work ethically, we did talk a lot about the ethics of landscaping in our landscaping classes. I learned a lot of information through those especially with Xxx and Xxx. All I learned from Ethics was how to tell someone if the type of argument they were making was valid or not.

There were only a few people in my classes, and all of them were greatly different from me in terms of interests, but we all worked well together and were able to accomplish some impressive projects.

Q18 - As a result of this program: - I am able to make decisions that incorporate the importance of sustainability.

Answer	%	Count
Strongly Disagree	0.00%	
Disagree	0.00%	
Neither Agree nor Disagree	0.00%	
Agree	60.00%	3
Strongly Agree	40.00%	2
Total	100%	5

Q19 - Provide any comments you have on what you learned about incorporating the importance of sustainability in decisions you make.

Because I care about our community and the health of our planet, I have already made the commitment to living sustainably the best I can before I came to Western for this program. The Principles of Sustainability class was not a good use of my time but I sure enjoyed meeting the instructor, Xxxxx Xxxxx, as they are a very sweet person!

As I have gone through this program I have gained a strong sense of sustainability and conservation which I look forward to using in the future and to educate others of its importance.

We talked about this a lot in our landscaping classes

Like the focus of the campus, almost every class I took had a section that related itself to sustainability.

Q21 - As a result of this program, I learned to:

Q21_1 - evaluate landscape construction systems, techniques, and processes.

Answer	%	Count
Strongly Disagree	0.00%	
Disagree	0.00%	
Neither Agree nor Disagree	0.00%	
Agree	40.00%	2
Strongly Agree	60.00%	3
Total	100%	5

Q22 - Provide any comments you have about learning this program outcome.

I have taken many notes and feel confident in my ability to apply these skills in real-life following graduation. I appreciate the hands-on experiences offered when learning these techniques and processes. I am happy to have taken advantage of these opportunities because it gave me confidence to tackle these types of projects in the future.

After multiple class times spend doing the same thing over and over I was able to come out with an understanding systems, techniques and processes relating to the field.

I wish that we had both of our landscape maintenance classes in the first year of the program but nonetheless, I felt these classes were some of the most valuable this program had to offer.

I know how to properly install plants, pavers, retaining walls, and other landscape systems up to standards. I would have liked more classes on irrigation systems though.

I

Q23 - As a result of this program, I learned to: - apply principles of landscape design and knowledge of plant material into landscape design drawings.

Answer	%	Count
Strongly Disagree	0.00%	
Disagree	0.00%	
Neither Agree nor Disagree	0.00%	
Agree	40.00%	2
Strongly Agree	60.00%	3
Total	100%	5

Q24 - Provide any comments you have about learning this program outcome.

As a result of this program, I have already started my own small-scale landscape design/install business and have clients waiting for me to graduate so I can spend time on their landscapes! There are many concepts we have learned that will help us effectively communicate with the client to provide them with what they want.

Sometimes my designs were looked at and thrown away and would have to start over. If it is not done correctly in to one person, then it was not done at all.

While I won't be going into Landscape Design, I learned an enormous amount in these classes. I feel that these classes also helped me outside of landscaping and helped me plan out things as a bigger picture. These were some of my favorite classes and I have already utilized them to help create a design for my parents house.

There is a strong focus on design and how to properly choose the right plants for the location whether they are sunny or shady spots or if you can put a path in a certain area.

I am currently just taking design 1 and it has been a process in learning. I haven't really cared for that class since I really don't want to be a designer but I also understand as that has to be made so a project can be done and you want people to see your design so they know what you are talking about.

Q25 - As a result of this program, I learned to: - demonstrate knowledge of plants, including their; selection, placement, planting, maintenance, and plant health care.

Answer	%	Count
Strongly Disagree	0.00%	
Disagree	0.00%	
Neither Agree nor Disagree	0.00%	
Agree	20.00%	1
Strongly Agree	80.00%	4
Total	100%	5

Q26 - Provide any comments you have about learning this program outcome.

I have intentions of furthering my plant knowledge (which I gained solely from Xxx Xxxxx, Xxxxx Xxxxxxx, and Xxxxxx Xxxxxx) and becoming a certified arborist and perhaps a greenhouse grower down the line. It is crucial to know plant characteristics in order to complete an exceptional design; furthermore, to operate a successful business. It would have been nice to have a full-time Greenhouse Grower to help get the greenhouse operating correctly from the beginning. Our class dedicated quite a lot of time to figuring this greenhouse out, specifically. Although it was beneficial and very "real-world", having a full-time instructor/grower would just make more sense in the efficiency of the greenhouse.

I would say especially in the first semester we learned a lot about all of these and it was useful.

This was focused heavily the first year, but the second year the classes do not really help to retain this knowledge. You could try to rearrange the order classes are taken to help alleviate this problem.

These classes have been fine. They have taught us how to grow plants and where they should be planted and how to take care of them as well.

Q27 - As a result of this program, I learned to:

Q27_1 - demonstrate knowledge of turf grass management.

Answer	%	Count
Strongly Disagree	0.00%	
Disagree	0.00%	
Neither Agree nor Disagree	0.00%	
Agree	60.00%	3
Strongly Agree	40.00%	2
Total	100%	5

Q28 - Provide any comments you have about learning this program outcome.

The BEST assignment Xxx Xxxxx gave us was our Turf Management project! I have numerous clients asking me how to take care of their lawn and asking questions like "What do you think this could be?" I feel quite confident now after taking Turf Management that I am able to start helping them with these types of issues.

Our turf class was not the most useful class we had in our program but I definitely think it is a necessary addition to it. Our final project with our Turf book was very valuable I thought. I only wish we had been able to keep the book we created afterwards. All I had for a printer was the Library and I didn't want to double everything.

I think I would have benefited from more turf classes, but Xxx took the time to help me whenever I had questions and helped me to get an internship as a turf intern so I was able to get the knowledge I needed.

This class was very enjoy able as I love to take care of lawns. We learned proper mowing heights, watering, fertilizing, and applying pesticides. It was a very crucial class in what I want to do in life.

Q35 - CONCLUSION Please use this space to share any other feedback, comments, or suggestions about your experience at Western Technical College.

I frequently use the library and go to the Union; the staff in these two places are wonderful! They are helpful and kind and will help you if you need it! It is nice to see them on a regular basis because they are so pleasant! Parking this year wasn't bad and I was so glad when the new Industrial Technology Center opened - what a neat building! I'd like to recommend this program to others, solely based, on the core requirements. Xxx Xxxxx, Xxx Xxxxxx, Xxx Xxxxx, and Xxx Xxxxxxx should all receive a monetary bonus for a job well-done: they all taught and lead us extremely well and effectively, with enthusiasm and passion! Thank you for this opportunity to provide feedback!

I did not feel challenged in this program at all. Maybe because I have an interest in another totally unrelated field that is why. The college needs to bring Xxxxx Xxxxxxx back as a full time instructor. I learned so much from them and they have a diverse way of presenting information to the class. I will honestly say I did not learn anything new my second year in the program. I learned everything I know my first year and in high school and my second year was just a "refresher course" of my first year. Due to the college dedicating time, money and energy into a beautiful greenhouse facility, they need to hire someone to take care and be present full time. Our plants for this years plant sale have succumbed to nutrient deficiency because we did not have a full time care-taker who was well-educated and had broad field experience.

While I didn't intend to be overly harsh in my criticisms, I thought they were necessary to make. Xxxx Xxxxx and Xxxxx Xxxxxxxx were two of my favorite instructors I have ever had. Unfortunately Xxxxx didn't come back the second year so I feel my experience here was tainted by people who got thrown into teaching horticulture classes in which they weren't qualified to teach (namely Organic Plant Production with Xxx Xxxxxxxx and Plant Science with Xxxxx Xxxxx). I'm not saying these teachers are bad or don't know what they're talking about, just the fact that they should both stick to agriculture with their classes. Another frustration of mine was the lack of communication, if I email a teacher I would like to hear back from them. Even if they would prefer me to meet with them in person, I would like to know that in the email. My Math and Ethics teachers both did not reply to me when I reached out and that was very frustrating and resulted in a lot of frustration and lack of motivation.

I really disliked how most of the second year felt like we were treated as the guinea pig students. What I mean by that is that with the new greenhouse we didn't know how everything worked coming in and probably still don't. Also the fact that the school let Xxxxx go was a huge blow to morale for everyone. Xxxxx taught us so much in the one semester I had with them, and honestly they were irreplaceable. Since they were let go the higher ups needed to find replacements and they did a terrible job with that. In case they did not know the name of the program it is Landscape Horticulture, not Agriculture. None of my classmates wanted to go into farming, and yet we were given replacement teachers who only teach farming. For this reason I think we lost a lot of students along the way. Xxxx is a great teacher, person, and mentor, not just to me but to all of the students, but with Xxxxx being let go it put a lot more work on them. My suggestions for the future of the program are simple: more landscape related courses such as irrigation taught by teachers who have experience in that subject and not agriculture (there is a difference), and to cut out some of the unnecessary classes like Thinking Critically and Creatively and Principles of Sustainability because every class has those skills built into them.

I have enjoyed the teachers and like how the classes are small. What I don't like is some of the classes get to be way to long and it would be better to space them out between 3 or 4 days instead of just 1 or 2. It just makes the classes boring after 2 hours.